

EXHIBIT 1

Letter from Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Homeland Defense and Hemispheric Affairs
Melissa Dalton to Sen. Roger Wicker (Aug. 1,
2023)



HOMELAND DEFENSE
& HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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AUG 01 2023

The Honorable Roger F. Wicker
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wicker:

Thank you for your March 15, 2023, letter regarding the disposition of border wall materials procured during the previous administration. I have confirmed the following information with the Department of the Army, which manages the relevant contracts.

Of the approximately \$260 million worth of materials, approximately \$154 million worth – 91 percent of non-bollard panel materials and 4 percent of bollard panel materials – have been transferred to Department of Defense (DoD) Components, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the State of Texas through the Defense Logistics Agency's excess property disposition process.

Because the bollard panels in the Army's possession were fabricated and acquired using DoD appropriations, the Army has been exploring opportunities to use the remaining bollard panel materials to address military requirements. A decision on the disposition of the remaining materials will be made in accordance with applicable law and policy.

The contractors who were constructing border barriers have been storing and securing remaining border wall materials, and, in some cases, made arrangements for the use of privately owned land for this purpose, as necessary. The Department entered into these border barrier construction contracts in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

It is the Army's assessment that the cost to store border wall materials has decreased substantially over time as contractors have disposed of materials. Although the Army has created cost estimates at various points in time, that number is constantly changing and is expected to continue to decrease over the course of the termination process. At this time, the Army can generate estimates only because it pays its vendors once a contract has closed out, based on a review of documented and audited costs. In May 2023, the Army estimated that storage costs to the U.S. Government were approximately \$160,000 per month. That number will continue to decrease as closeout continues.

The Department recognizes that the House and Senate versions of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 would direct the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress a plan to utilize, transfer, or donate to States on the southern border of the United States all existing excess border wall construction materials. The Department affirms that it will always act in accordance with the law.

The Department of Defense stands ready to respond to any additional questions about the status of border wall materials and related contracts.

Thank you for your support of the Department of Defense. I am sending identical responses to the other signatories of your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Melissa G. Dalton